

IN THE CLAIMS

Please amend the claims as follows:

Claims 1-15 (Canceled).

Claim 16 (New): A data processing device comprising:

a data input means for inputting a field value; and

a data processing control means for controlling storing a plurality of records each having a plurality of fields in a first storage area of a data storing section, storing a field value in a second storage area of the data storing section, storing a pointer to the second storage area storing the field value in at least one of the fields, and sorting the records by using the pointer as a part of a sort key of each of the records to determine sorting order among the records.

Claim 17 (New): The data processing device according to claim 16, wherein the field value stored in the second storage area indicated by the pointer is compared immediately before the pointer in determining sorting order among the records.

Claim 18 (New): The data processing device according to claim 16, wherein the data processing control means performs a retrieval operation by using the pointer to the second storage area storing the field value as one of searching keys.

Claim 19 (New): The data processing device according to claim 18, wherein the retrieval operation performed by the data processing control means is a binary search performed on the sorted records.

Claim 20 (New): The data processing device according to claim 18, wherein the field value stored in the second storage area indicated by the pointer is compared immediately before the pointer in determining sorting order among the records.